128 erally which was discussed in the previous chapter. At times,
[125] quantitative data will be presented on a sample of 44 individuals, representing various selected social categories (see further definition of this sample given in Chapter 4).

1. Farming.

• 42 All land belongs, in theory, to the Shehu and is distributed by Lowans through the authority given them by the Shehu. A man living in the town of Geidam has a right to land surrounding the town, should he wish to make a farm. Such land becomes his in the sense that no one else can farm there, and it is inherited
[651] by his children like other forms of property. Any man who pays the property tax (haraji) in Geidam has a right to land. A newcomer to the town who desires land to farm asks a Lowan for a
[311] plot of land. Since all farm land up to two miles from the edge of the town is farmed by those previously settled in the town, land given to newcomers is uncleared brush far from the town it-
[662] self. However, by paying a sum to the Lowan, a man may be assigned land which is much closer and therefore more desirable. Unused sites become available when people leave Geidam.

House sites come under the same provisions as farm land. If a man wishes to build a house in Geidam he must first ask the permission of the Lowan in whose ward he seeks to build his house. If he wishes to build on unoccupied land he must pay a
[435] sum to the Lowan. The sum may vary from three to ten shillings, depending on the man's means. A man can sell a house which he

42 has built, as it was built through his labor or his money.
[435] Since there is great pressure for desirable house sites, an old house which is no longer worth much but is located on a good site will be sold for an amount far exceeding the value of the house itself. To all intents and purposes the owner is selling
42 226 the land on which the house stands. Fishing sites along the river are under the "ownership" of the Lowans, and sites are given to people to use. Fishing sites are inherited but may not be sold.

425 178 As was pointed out earlier, land is increasingly viewed as a commodity which can be bought and sold. Original Kanuri ideas about land have been undergoing change. Just as house sites within the town are sold, so too farm land is sold under
425 671 [651] certain conditions. The legality of these proceedings, according to Kanuri law, is still somewhat vague. A stranger coming to Geidam will be given land to farm only if he intends to remain in Geidam and will pay his haraji there. A Geidam man who moves elsewhere, and does not intend to return, will consequently be paying his haraji in the new town where he will settle. He
[427] forfeits the rights which he held to farmland in Geidam. Nor may he sell that land except under special conditions. However, one Geidam man may give, rent or sell his farm land to another Geidam man. Both, of course, continue to pay haraji in Geidam. According to the Alkali of Geidam, sale of farm land is legally viewed in the following manner: if a man's father worked a piece of land and he in turn inherited that land, his possession of the